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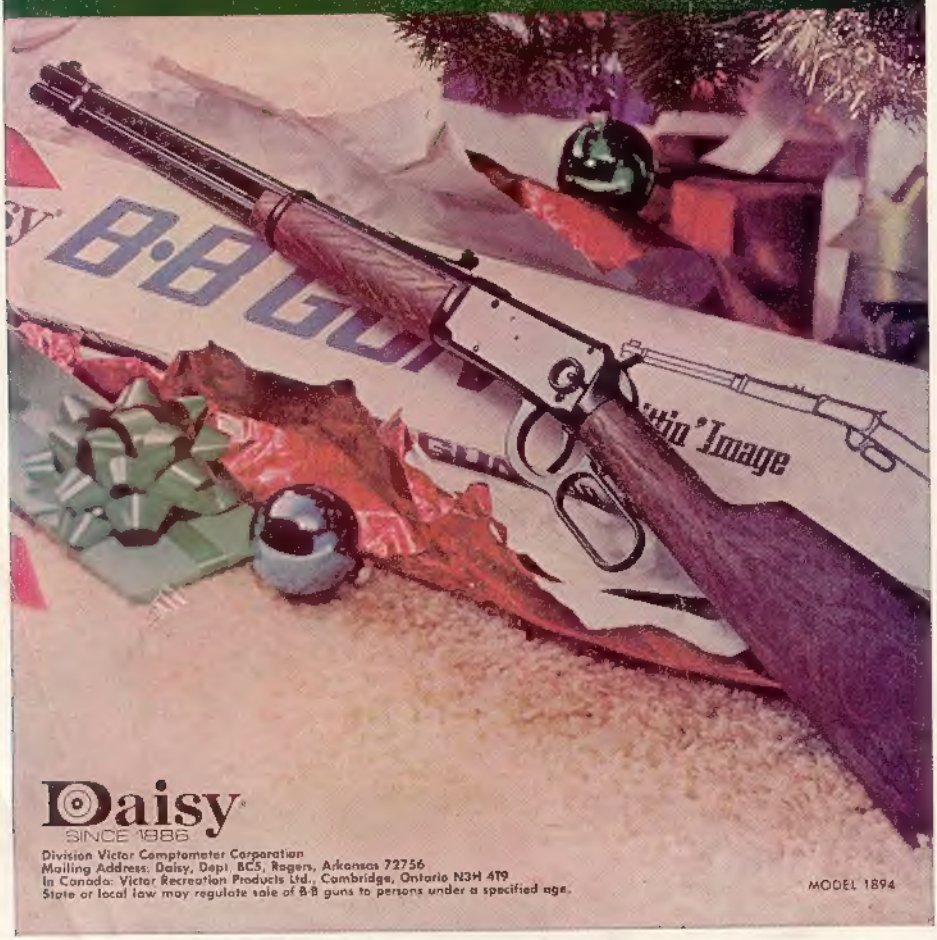

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BEGINNING:
A SENSATIONAL NEW CHAPTER IN THE CRUSADING CAREER OF..

AQUAMAN

MOVE AWAY FROM THAT GATE, GUARDS! ON MY AUTHORITY AS THE KING OF ATLANTIS, I DEMAND ENTRANCE TO OUR UNDERSEA ARSENAL!

I'M SORRY, AQUAMAN -- BUT YOU HAVE NO AUTHORITY!

YOU ARE NO LONGER OUR KING!

FOR A DECADE, HE HAS BEEN THE RULER OF THE MIGHTIEST NATION BENEATH THE ICY BLUE WATERS OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN. BUT THIS RULE IS OVER NOW, AND ALL THAT'S LEFT TO AQUAMAN IS A SINGLE FATEFUL CHOICE...

AND DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR

PAUL LEVITZ and GERRY CONWAY
WRITERS
JOE ORLANDO
EDITOR

h-4188

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LOOK, I DON'T HAVE ANY TIME FOR *PRACTICAL JOKES*-- IF THIS IS A GAG *MERA* OR *AQUALAD* COOKED UP FOR YOU TO PLAY ON ME, *FORGET IT!*

I'D BETTER BE *OUT* OF THAT ARSENAL *WITH SERUM X* IN MY HAND BEFORE YOU CAN *APOLOGIZE*--

--OR YOU'LL BE PATROLLING *POLAR WATERS* UNTIL THE ICEBERGS MELT!

THIS LASER RIFLE IS *NO JOKE*, AQUAMAN, EITHER YOU TURN YOUR FINS AROUND AND SWIM OUT'A HERE, OR I'M GONNA *BURN* YOU!

IF YOU WANT ANY EXPLANATIONS, ASK IN THE CITY-DOME ...*WE* DON'T OWE YOU ANY ANSWERS!

I *TOLD* YOU CLOWNS I COULDN'T AFFORD TO *WASTE* ANY TIME... IF YOU WANT TO *FOOL YOURSELVES*, GO AHEAD--

--BUT I'M COMING THROUGH!

ZZZZT!

THE *MARINE MARVEL* DODGES THE *BOILING BLAST* OF THE GUARD'S RIFLE WITH EASE, USING THE UNDERSEA AGILITY WHICH HE ALONE POSSESSES...

WHILE USING HIS *TELEPATHIC POWERS* TO BRING AN EIGHT-ARMED ALLY INTO THE FRAY...

GOOD *TOPO*, THAT'S *ONE* GUN OUT OF ACTION-- NOW TO TAKE CARE OF THE *OTHER!*

KRAK

AND *THAT*, GENTLEMEN... IS *THAT!!*

WHEN I *RETURN* TO ATLANTIS I'LL BE GLAD TO HEAR THE STORY BEHIND THIS INSANE JEST OF YOURS, GUARDSMEN--

--AND *IF* IT'S ENTERTAINING, I MAY LET YOU OFF WITH *ONLY* FIVE YEARS OF COMMUNING WITH *PENGUINS!*

BUT IN THE *MEANTIME*, WHY DON'T YOU GO BACK HOME AND *PACK*?

THERE'S ONLY ONE *SLIGHT PROBLEM* WITH THAT, *AQUAMAN*--

--THESE GUARDS *AREN'T KIDDING!*

WHAT--? DON'T YOU KNOW WHEN TO QUIT?

OUR *ORDERS* ARE TO KEEP INTRUDERS OUT OF THE ARSENAL AT ALL COSTS--

--AND YOU ARE AN *INTRUDERRR... UHHHHNNG!!*

PHEW! SURE ARE PERSISTENT... DON'T KNOW WHETHER THEY'RE JUST *STUPID* OR THERE'S SOMETHING *STRANGE* GOING ON HERE!

NO TIME TO INVESTIGATE, THOUGH ...JUST ENOUGH TO GRAB THE *SERUM X* AND RUN... SOON AS MY *FINGERPRINTS ACTIVATE* THE GATE'S SPECIAL--

--*UNLOCKING DEVIICCEEEE!*

ZZZATT!

BUT AS THE SEA KING'S HAND CONTACTS THE METAL PLATE, THE WATER *ERUPTS* IN A *PAROXYSM OF PAIN*--A SHOCK THAT SENDS *AQUAMAN* INTO THE BLACK DEPTHS OF *UNCONSCIOUSNESS*--

--AND INTO *RECOLLECTIONS* OF THE *LAST* SHOCK HIS SYSTEM RECEIVED... *SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE*, OFF THE COAST OF FRANCE...

BETWEEN CATCHING THE *FISHERMAN* AND TRACKING DOWN HIS WHOLE DRUG-SMUGGLING RACKET, I'VE BEEN GONE FROM ATLANTIS FOR *WEEKS!*

CAN'T IMAGINE HOW *BATMAN* KEEPS UP HIS *BRUCE WAYNE-PLAYBOY* IMAGE... IT'S ALL *I* CAN DO TO ARRANGE A *QUIET EVENING* WITH *MERA!*

GETTING SO WE--

HUH?

THE *ATLANTEAN VESSELS* THAT ARE *ATTACKING MONACO* WILL NOT COMMENT BEYOND *DEMANDING* THE TINY COUNTRY'S TREASURY BE PAID--

--OVER TO THEM IN THE FORM OF GOLD AND SILVER BUL--

BEFORE THE NEWSCASTER CAN EVEN *COMPLETE* HIS BRIEF BULLETIN, *AQUAMAN* IS FAR OUT OF HEARING. HE HAS HEARD ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT HE IS NEEDED--

--AND THAT HAS SENT HIM SWIMMING AWAY AT A PACE NO PLEASURE SHIP CAN MATCH.

A SPEED THAT BRINGS HIM TO *MONACO* AT *PRECISELY* THE RIGHT MOMENT: *AFTER* THE *NATO* FORCES ASSIGNED TO DEFEND THE AREA HAVE DECIDED TO *WAIT* FOR THE SO-CALLED ATLANTEANS TO ACT--

--AND *BEFORE* THE UNDERSEA INVADERS DO!

IF THESE ARE *ATLANTEAN SHIPS*, THEN MY COUNTRY WENT ON A BIG *MILITARIZATION* PROGRAM SINCE I'VE BEEN GONE--

--NOT TO MENTION TAKING *BLACKMAIL* LESSONS!

BUT *WHOEVER'S* BEHIND THIS, I WANT TO HAVE A *LONG* TALK WITH HIM--

--*AFTER* A FEW OF MY *FINNY FRIENDS INTRODUCE* US PROPERLY!

THE *SILENT SUMMONS* FANS OUT ACROSS THE OCEAN FLOOR ...WAKING VARIOUS DENIZENS AND CALLING THEM TO THEIR MASTER'S SIDE...

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

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AND MY HAMMERHEADED FRIENDS ARE GREAT FOR KNOCKING ON DOORS--

WHUMP

--OR MAKING NEW ONES!

KRASSH

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! THE COMMAND CHAMBER WAS HIDDEN...IN-DISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE REST OF THE SHIPS! HOW COULD HE HAVE FOUND IT!

NO MATTER... IT'S DONE! THOSE FOOLS CANNOT STOP *HIM!* THE GAME IS LOST... UNLESS I RAISE MY HAND AGAINST HIS FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE LEARNING THE TRUTH!

STRANGE...THEY'RE NOT ATLANTEANS, AND THEY DON'T SEEM TO BE *SMART* ENOUGH TO PLAN SUCH A STUNT! GUESS I STILL HAVEN'T FOUND THE BRAINS OF THIS ORGANIZATION!

WRONG, AQUAMAN-- YOU'VE FOUND ME, AND YOU'LL SOON REGRET YOU DID!

ORM!

YES, DEAR HALF-BROTHER, IT IS ME... ONLY I PREFER TO BE KNOWN BY MY TITLE--

--OCEAN MASTER!

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN-- ONLY YOU COMBINE A KNOWLEDGE OF ATLANTEAN SHIP-BUILDING WITH A TASTE FOR BLACKMAIL!

AS I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT YOU WOULD *INTERFERE*, AS YOU HAVE ALWAYS... BUT THIS TIME, YOU WON'T STOP ME!

MAYBE I WON'T--

--BUT MY FISH WILL!

KKRRZZAP

BUT THE CHARGE IS STOPPED AS QUICKLY AS IT IS STARTED, AS THE OCEAN MASTER ACTIVATES AN ELECTRICAL SHOCK FIELD -- STUNNING THE FISH INTO INSENSIBILITY.

STALEMATE, AQUAMAN! YOUR FISH CANNOT HARM, AND YOU DO NOT DARE TO HURT YOUR OWN BROTHER... PARTICULARLY WHEN I HOLD THE SIGNALLER THAT CAN SEND MY FLEET TO DESTROY MONACO!

BUT I HAVE A SOLUTION! MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE I WISH TO PROVE THE WORLD THAT I AM YOUR EQUAL, AND AT LAST I KNOW HOW!

IN YOUR ARSENAL YOU HAVE A SECRET *SERUM X*, WHICH CAN TURN INTO WATER-BREATHERS! WITH IT, I CAN CARVE AN UNDERSEA KINGDOM *GREATER* THAN ATLANTIS--

--BRING ME SERUM X, AND ALL WILL BE--

--WELL, AQUAMAN...

WHAT HAVE YOU TO SAY IN YOUR *DEFENSE*?

WH-*WHERE* AM I? MERA! YULKO! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

THE SIGHT IS A FAMILAR ONE: THE THRONE ROOM OF ATLANTIS. BUT THE VIEW IS STILL *STARTLING*--FOR INSTEAD OF LOOKING *DOWN* FROM THE CLAM-SHELL CHAIR--

--AQUAMAN IS GAZING *UP* AT ITS NEW OCCUPANT.

I FAIL TO UNDERSTAND YOUR CONFUSION, AQUAMAN! SURELY YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE ...AND THOSE WHO SURROUND YOU ARE THE COURT FROM YOUR DAYS AS KING!

AND AS FOR ME, WELL, IT IS SAID THAT *NO MAN* KNOWS HIS SUCCESSOR--*UNTIL* HE HAS BEEN SUCCEEDED!

I AM *KARSHON*--AND I AM *KING OF ATLANTIS* NOW!

I DON'T CARE IF YOU THINK YOU'RE QUEEN OF THE MAY--I'M NOT GOING TO BE DETHRONED BY SOMEONE I'VE NEVER HEARD OF WHILE I WAS ATTENDING TO MY DUTIES ELSE-WHERE!

NO, DARLING--YOU CAN'T FIGHT HIM! HE'S RIGHT!

MERA--HAVE YOU GONE CRAZY TOO? IS *EVERYONE* MAD?

IT'S THE *LAW*, NOT US! YOU WERE *ELECTED* KING, MY HUSBAND, AND ATLANTEAN LAW SAYS THE COUNCIL CAN REMOVE YOU FROM OFFICE AT WILL!

WHILE YOU WERE GONE, THEY SIMPLY CHOSE TO ACT!

YOU WERE AN ABSENTEE KING, WORRYING MORE ABOUT THE SURFACE DWELLERS THAN YOUR OWN PEOPLE! I SHALL LEAD *ATLANTIS*--

--AND LET THE REST OF THE WORLD FIND ITS OWN WAY!

BUT I COULDN'T TURN MY BACK ON THE WORLD--I WAS A SUPER-HERO LONG BEFORE I WAS A KING!

CONTINUED ON 4TH PAGE FOLLOWING

DATELINE: ADVENTURE

Dear Joe,

What is it that makes **ADVENTURE COMICS** so bloody good?

I wish I knew. As a matter of fact, I wish all the other **DC** editors knew, too. It must have something to do with the willingness of the staff to experiment with new styles and topics. How many comics would have featured a revolutionary, controversial hero like the **Spectre**? Or sponsor the first run of a 30 year old **SSV** serial? Now the book has turned around and been given an established superhero-type star, and it still leans toward the exceptional.

Characterization? A clarification of Atlantis' position in world politics? Dissent among **Aquaman's** subjects? Wow. Sub-plots have always been an integral part of the **Aquaman** legend, and I'm glad to see that Paul Levitz hasn't overlooked them. It's really intriguing to consider the possibilities of the King of Atlantis resigning his post. Or, better yet, I'd like to see how **Aquaman** would handle a full-scale Atlantean revolution.

Still, all was not roses in "H is for Holocaust." When are you going to rename this mag "Fascist Liberator Comics"? Every other issue, it seems, a terrorist group is liberating some poor capitalist. It wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't for all the flowing cliches. "Are you trying to pull some sort of filthy Imperialist trick?"

As it stands right now, **ADVENTURE** is making a solid run at being the best comic on the stands. Now if you could just bring back the Sneris.

Kevin L. Callahan, Brea, California

Nope, no more Sneris...but the CREEPER will be starring in a three-part back-up feature beginning next issue, with creative services by Martin Pasko, Ric Estrada and Joe Staton. Experimental enough?

• • • • •

Dear Joe,

After reading the previous issue I was somewhat doubtful as to Paul Levitz' ability as an **Aquaman** writer. However, "H Is For Holocaust" proves that I was mistaken.

In spite of the stereotyped liberators, the story was high-quality throughout. Under Dick Giordano's editorship, **Aquaman** was **DC's** best series, and **DC's** first experiment with relevance (subtle relevance that is). That seems to be returning, as **Aquaman** becomes involved in various political situations—an angle that Levitz is already exploring (I understand that there's to be a series in which **Aquaman** is dethroned). Bring back the secondary characters, and keep them secondary . . . and above all, experiment!

Carl Cafarelli, North Syracuse, New York

Thanks for the vote of confidence, but unfortunately the press of his junior year at college has forced Paul to give up most of his writing. Gerry Conway pinch-hit by dialoguing the last half of this issue, and other writers will be working over Paul's plots to finish off the current serial (which ends in #450, hopefully).

• • • • •

Dear Adventurers,

Oh my, continuity!

I thought the relevant period was dead after **GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW** was cancelled. But after reading **ADVENTURE COMICS #442**, I feel that your comics are painfully experiencing a return to that thought-provoking period when you proved that comics have grown up.

Aquaman at long last, is being portrayed as a man heavily burdened with both the responsibilities of running a rather unique kingdom and protecting the seas against evil forces. The tale breaks up the plastic mold of the super-hero and resembles the well paced suspenseful stories of 1970-72. Jim Aparo is the icing on the cake. In fact, with any other artist working on the series, the thing could fall flat.

Mark Dooley, Columbus, Indiana

• • • • •

Stay tuned for "Toxxin's Revenge" and AQUAMAN'S new headquarters . . . not to mention THE CREEPER in "Deadly Medicine" . . . and keep those cards and letters coming to: DATELINE: ADVENTURE, National Periodical Publications, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10019

SHAZAM!
HOLY MOLEY! WE'VE JUST GOTTEN WORD THAT THE STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE OF CUP CAKES AROUND THE WORLD IS CONTINUING!
IF ONLY WE COULD GET IN TOUCH WITH CAPTAIN MARVEL!
THESE CUP CAKE CROOKS, KIDS COULD BE IN REAL TROUBLE!
SHAZAM!
BAM!
CUP CAKE CAPER. MY PROBLEM FIND WHO BEHIND IT- AND WHERE THEY'VE STASHED THE GOODIES
PUT THOSE HOSTESS CUP CAKES OVER THERE MAC
RIGHT OFF
THAT COMPLETES THE CUP CAKE CAPER. WE'VE GOT ALL THE CUP CAKES NOW
I SUPPOSE YOU WANT US TO RETURN THESE HOSTESS CUP CAKES TO THE KIDS, JUST BECAUSE THEY LIKE THE DEVIL'S FOOD CAKE, CHOCOLATY ICING AND CREAMY FILLING.
THAT'S CORRECT, MY FIENDISH FRIEND THAT'S WHY I'M ENDING YOUR CAPER RIGHT NOW!
THANKS FOR ENDING THE CUP CAKE CAPER, CAPTAIN MARVEL
THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR, KIDS!

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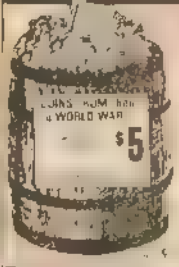

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HUNDRED

THEN *BE* A SUPER-HERO, AQUAMAN... FOR YOU ARE *NO LONGER* A KING!

THE CHAMBER DOOR CLOSES WITH A FINALITY THAT CLOSES AN ERA...

...AND FILLS THE ROOM WITH A FEELING OF FAREWELL...

I WAS PROUD TO SERVE AS YOUR *CHIEF OF SECURITY*, AQUAMAN, BUT I NOW SERVE KARSHON, AND IT IS MY DUTY TO *WARN* YOU!

HIS MAJESTY HAS SEEN FIT TO *PARDON* YOU FOR YOUR UNORTHODOX ACTIONS AT THE ARSENAL EARLIER!

BUT ANY *FUTURE VIOLATIONS* OF THE LAW WILL FORCE HIM TO *EXILE* YOU FROM ATLANTIS FOREVER!

WHAT OF THE SERUM X, JARSEN? I MUST HAVE IT TO STOP THE OCEAN MASTER--!

ATLANTIS DOES NOT GIVE ITS SECRETS TO ITS *CITIZENS* FOR THE ASKING!

THE OCEAN MASTER IS *YOUR* AFFAIR, AQUAMAN... AND SERUM X IS OURS! I SUGGEST YOU FIND *ANOTHER* ANSWER!

THE THRONE ROOM GROWS QUIET AND EMPTY, AS THE FORMER MONARCH IS COMFORTED BY THE WOMAN WHO SHARES HIS PAIN...

WHILE A LESS MERCIFUL FIGURE WATCHES FROM THE SHADOWS...

TENDER, ISN'T IT? HERO LOSES HIS THRONE, BUT GETS THE GIRL! BUT IT WILL HARDEN HIM, LITTLE BROTHER...

AND THE TOUGHER THE PREY, THE SWEETER THE VICTORY!

STRANGE DEVELOPMENTS INDEED IN THE ANCIENT UNDERWATER CITY. BUT LET US NOW TURN FROM THE NEW RULER OF THE DOMED METROPOLIS--

--TO THE *OLD*.

MERA, MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING *WRONG* WITH ME--BUT I *STILL* CAN'T BELIEVE I'VE BEEN DISPOSED!

I FEEL *NUMB*--*CONFUSED*--*ANGRY*--AND YET--

--SOMEHOW --IT ALL SEEMS SO *DISTANT*, AS THOUGH IT WERE HAPPENING TO SOMEONE *ELSE*!

I KNOW IT'S A *SHOCK*, DARLING --BUT IT'S FOR THE BEST, *BELIEVE* ME!

IS IT, MERA? IS IT *REALLY*? WHAT ABOUT *OCEAN MASTER*?

HE'S THE GREATEST THREAT THE SEA HAS EVER KNOWN--AND NOW I'M *HELPLESS* TO STOP HIM!

"*HELPLESS*"? IN WHAT *WAY*?

HUSBAND, PERHAPS YOU'RE NO LONGER *KING*--

--BUT YOU'RE STILL *AQUAMAN*, THE GREATEST HERO IN ALL THE *OCEAN*!

LEGALLY, YOU CAN'T *TOUCH* SERUM X...BUT MORALLY YOU *HAVE* TO--

MERA--ARE YOU *SERIOUS*?

I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE SERIOUS IN MY LIFE!

AS IT COMES TO THE SURFACE WORLD, NIGHT ALSO COMES TO *ATLANTIS*, REACHING TO ALL CORNERS OF THE UNDERWATER CITY, BROKEN ONLY BY THE DIMLY GLOWING *ALGAE-LAMPS* USED BY THE ATLANTEANS FOR ILLUMINATION...

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I WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT THE LAW SO THAT YOU CAN BE A GOOD CITIZEN.
LOOK FOR ME, LEARN ABOUT THE LAW, AND MAKE YOUR COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.
THE SYMBOL OF DC SUPER STARS
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AQUAMAN! YOU MUST BE INSANE-- UTTERLY CRA-- UNNNNG!

TRRG!

I'VE GOT TO HAND IT TO MERA--WHEN SHE WANTS TO BE, SHE'S AN INCREDIBLY GOOD TACTICIAN! THIS CORAL-SHIELD WAS EXCELLENT--!

WHUUUF!

SO MUCH FOR THE GUARDS! I ALMOST FEEL LIKE A CRIMINAL-- BUT THIS TIME THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS!

SINCE THEY'VE CHANGED THE FINGERPRINT LOCK, MY TOUCH WON'T OPEN THE ARSENAL GATE-- SOOOO--

KNK

--I'LL HAVE TO USE THIS DE-MAGNETIZING DEVICE TO UNDO THE LOCK MECHANICALLY!

MERA'S HARD-WATER POWERS SHOULD PROTECT HER HERE IN ATLANTIS, WHILE I TAKE SERUM X TO MY HALF-BROTHER! I JUST HOPE SHE--EH?

KARSHON!

I KNEW YOU'D STOOP TO THIEVERY, AQUAMAN--AND I WANTED TO BE THE MAN TO MAKE YOU PAY!

DIE, TRAITOR! TONIGHT I AM YOUR EXECUTIONER!

DOESN'T MAKE *SENSE!* KARSHON --*WAITING* FOR ME IN THE ARSENAL-- WITH A *PET SHARK*?

I'M THE ONLY ATLANTEAN WHO CAN CONTROL FISH-- SO *HOW*--?

URRRFH!

THRASH

EASY, SKULL-- STOP SPINNING! IF I'M TO GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE, I'LL NEED MY WITS *INTACT*--

--AS *WELL* AS MY *BODY!*

HIS HEAD STILL THROBBING WITH PAIN, AQUAMAN SWINGS TO HIS FEET-- AND ABRUPTLY REMEMBERS WHAT HE MOMENTARILY *FORGOT*...

OH MY LORD--THE SHARK--!

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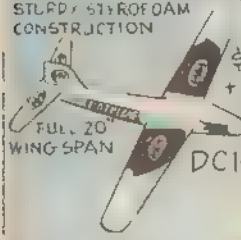

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ANOTHER MAN MIGHT FREEZE IN BLOOD--CHILLED *HORROR*--AND THAT MAN WOULD *DIE*.

ANOTHER MAN, PERHAPS--BUT NOT *AQUAMAN*.

HE *MOVES*.

HE MOVES WITH *STRENGTH*--

--*SPEED*--

--AND MOST OF ALL, *SKILL*!

SKRUNCH!

CORAL IS ONE OF THE *HARDEST* SUBSTANCES KNOWN TO MAN; THE *JAWS* OF A SHARK THE *STRONGEST*; AND WHEN THE TWO *MEET*--

--*SOMETHING'S* GOT TO GIVE!

IF I LIVE TO BE A THOUSAND, I HOPE I NEVER HAVE TO TRY *THAT* AGAIN!

WITH KARSHON AND HIS SHARK *BOTH* OUT OF COMMISSION--

--I'M FREE TO TAKE *SERUM X*!

BUT--DO I *WANT* TO? I JUST REALIZED--

X

--THE ENDS *DON'T* JUSTIFY THE MEANS, *EVER!* GIVING ORM THE SERUM WOULD *COMPROMISE* ME MORALLY, EVEN IF I PLANNED TO *TRICK* HIM -- WHICH I *DO!*

NO...DESPITE ALL I'VE DONE, THE SERUM *MUST* REMAIN HERE! I'LL FIND *ANOTHER* METHOD TO DEFEAT OCEAN MASTER...

...I *HOPE!*

?

IT SEEMS THE SEA KING'S HAD A CHANGE OF *HEART!* THAT DOESN'T EXACTLY FIT MY *PLAN* ...BUT NO MATTER!

I'LL *SEE* WHAT I CAN DO...

MORNING: FIFTEEN MILES OFF THE COAST OF MONACO, AT A DEPTH OF SIX HUNDRED FEET...

MY BROTHER MAY BE A SOFT-HEARTED FOOL, BUT HE'S NOT *STUPID!* HE WON'T *DARE* ATTACK THIS HEADQUARTERS OF OURS, JURGIN--

--SINCE HE KNOWS I CAN SEND *KAMIKAZE* TROOPS AGAINST THE MONACANS MERELY BY BROADCASTING ONE SMALL *SIGNAL!*

NO, JURGIN, AQUAMAN WILL FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS TO THE *LETTER!* WITHIN AN HOUR, *SERUM X* WILL BE MINE! THAT MUCH IS A *CERTAINTY!*

IN THAT CASE, MASTER--COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHAT HE'S DOING WITH THOSE *ELECTRIC EELS?*

EH?

NOOOO!

THE *SIGNAL!* IF I CAN JUST MOVE *QUICKLY* ENOUGH... PERHAPS--

BLAST HIM! IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE-- THE EELS HAVE SET UP A STATIC ELECTRIC *CHARGE*--

"--BLANKETING THE ENTIRE *AREA!* I CAN'T CONTACT MY TROOPS ON THE SURFACE--"

"--BUT I CAN STILL COMMAND THOSE *DOWN HERE*--"

"--AND I COMMAND THEM TO *ATTACK! ATTACK AND DESTROY AQUAMAN!*"

THERE'S A NOTE OF *HYSTERIA* IN ORM'S VOICE, A NOTE WHICH RISES TO A *SCREAM* WHEN HE SEES--

WHALES-- ANSWERING AQUAMAN'S MENTAL COMMAND!

TURN ASIDE, YOU FOOLS! TURN ASSIIIIDDEEE!

THE COMMAND COMES TOO LATE--AND THERE IS *DESTRUCTION.*

I'LL RUIN HIM FOR THIS! I'LL CAUSE HIM SUCH UTTER *HUMILIATION,* HE'LL NEVER--EH?

HE'S NO LONGER ON THE SCREEN! *WHERE*--?

HERE!

THESE MEN ARE *BROTHERS*, YET NO *LOVE* EXISTS BETWEEN THEM ...ONLY *HATE*.

THAT *HATE* EXISTS AS A LIVING THING, SO GREAT IT'S ALMOST *TANGIBLE*--

--SO *POWERFUL* IT'S DESTROYED ONE BROTHER'S *MIND*.

AAARRR

RRRR

THAM

THUMP

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOW

Fast Track to a Cool Job!

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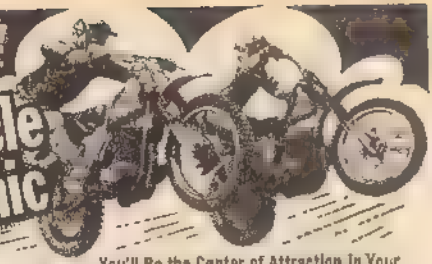

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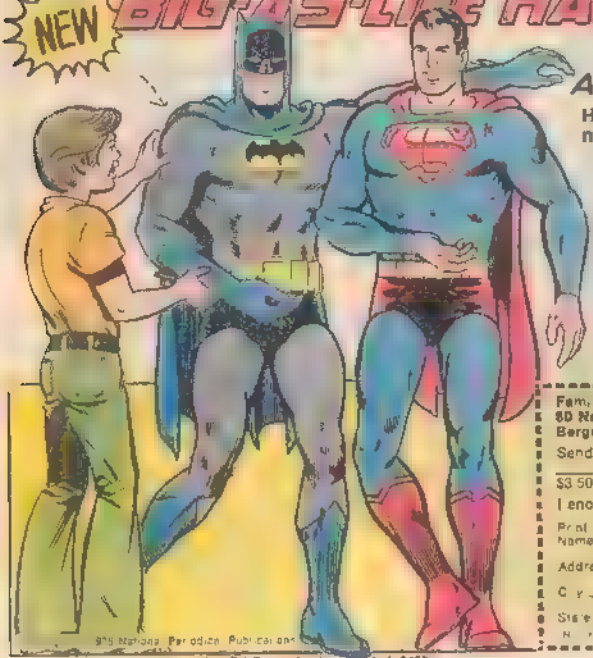

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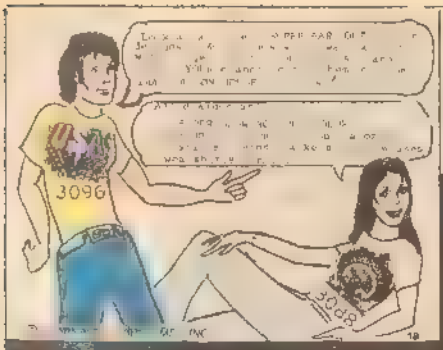

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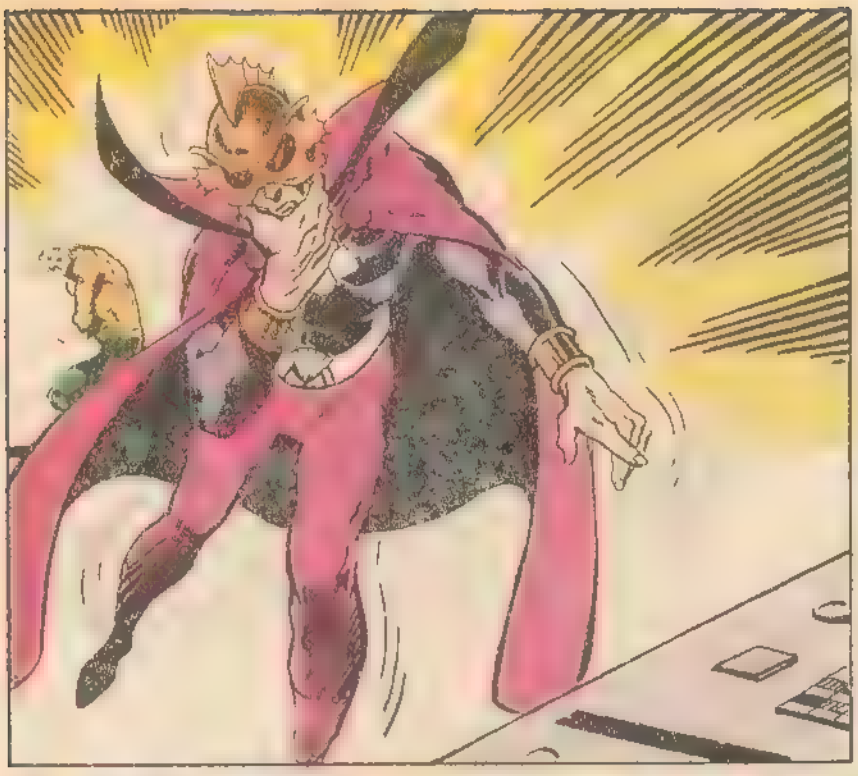
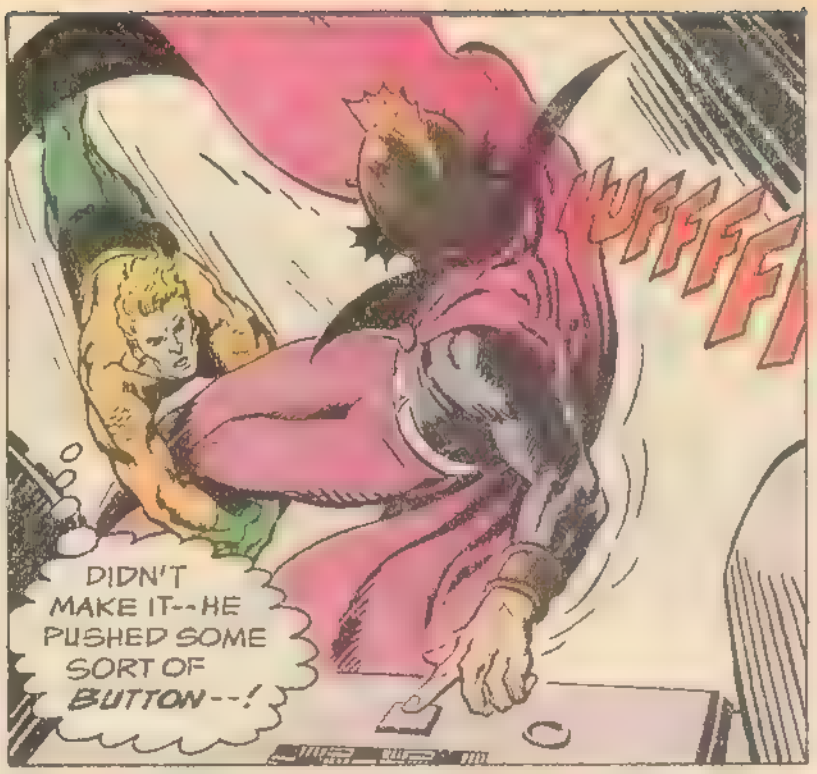
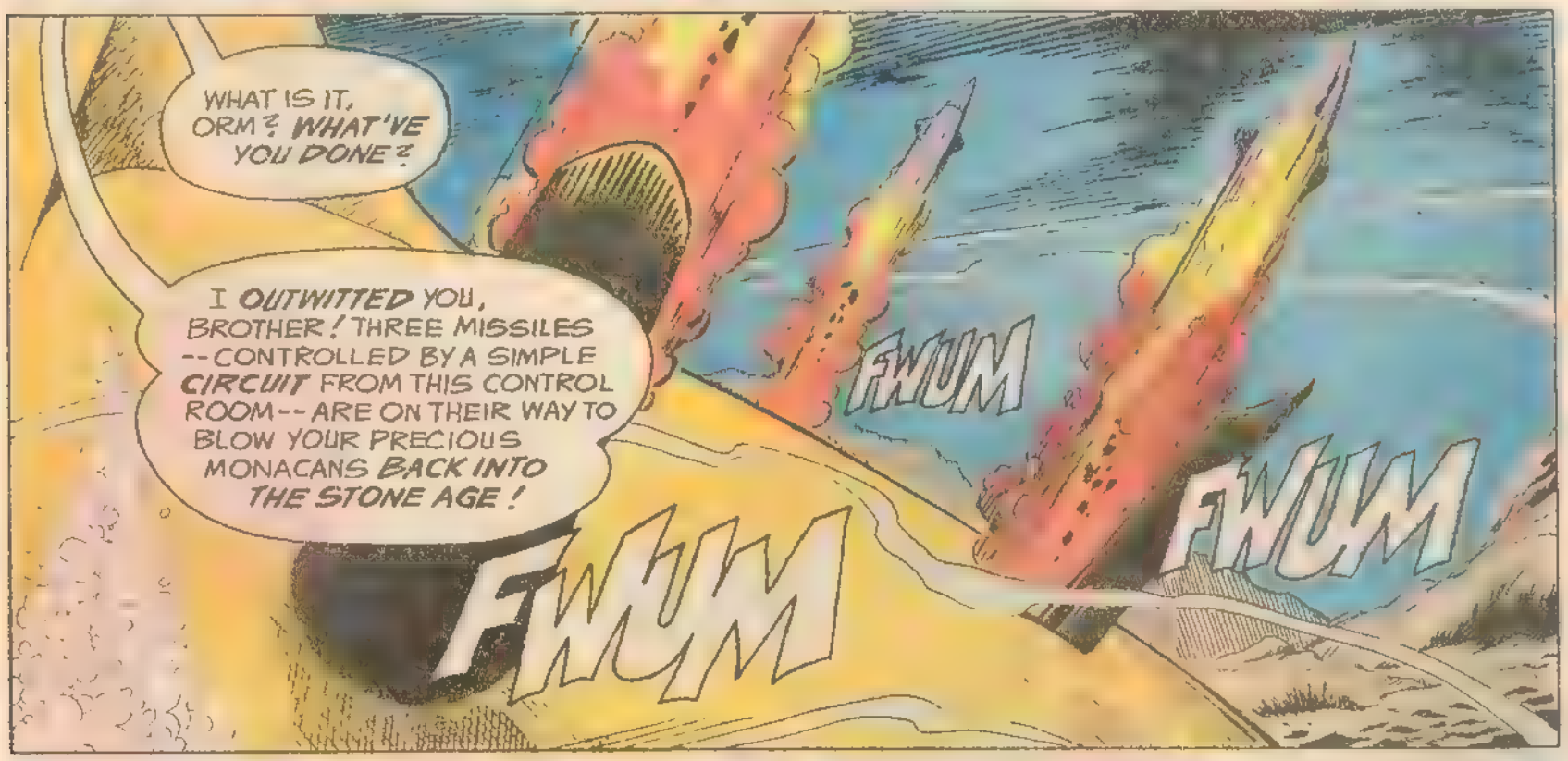
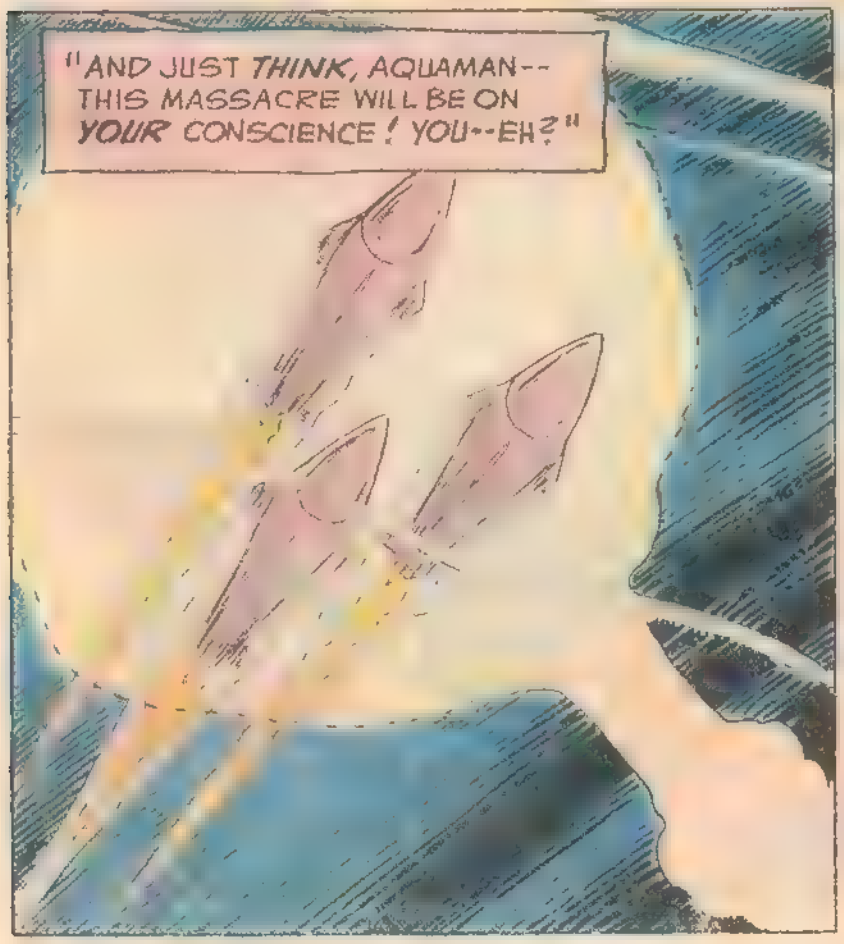
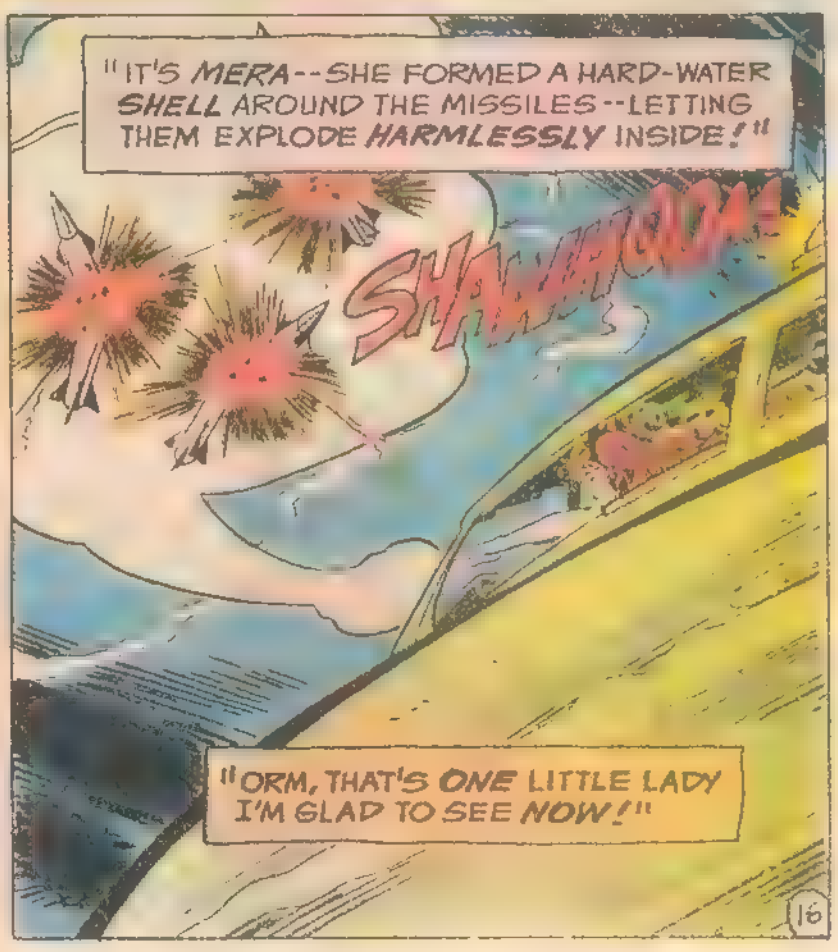



DIDN'T MAKE IT--HE PUSHED SOME SORT OF BUTTON--!


WHAT IS IT, ORM? WHAT'VE YOU DONE?
I OUTWITTED YOU, BROTHER! THREE MISSILES --CONTROLLED BY A SIMPLE CIRCUIT FROM THIS CONTROL ROOM--ARE ON THEIR WAY TO BLOW YOUR PRECIOUS MONACANS BACK INTO THE STONE AGE!
FWUM
FWUM
FWUM


"AND JUST THINK, AQUAMAN--THIS MASSACRE WILL BE ON YOUR CONSCIENCE! YOU--EH?"


"IT'S MERA--SHE FORMED A HARD-WATER SHELL AROUND THE MISSILES--LETTING THEM EXPLODE HARMLESSLY INSIDE!"
SHAWEEOOM
"ORM, THAT'S ONE LITTLE LADY I'M GLAD TO SEE NOW!"

AND SO...

--DON'T CARE *HOW* YOU GOT TO US IN TIME, MERA! I'M ONLY HAPPY YOU *DID!*

NO, DARLING... YOU *MUST* LISTEN! THIS IS IMPORTANT... *VITAL* TO OUR LIVES...

YOU SAY YOU DIDN'T *TAKE* THE SERUM AFTER ALL-- BUT, DARLING--THE SERUM'S *GONE*, AND *YOU'RE* BEING BLAMED FOR IT'S DISAPPEARANCE!

YOUR SON AND I BARELY *ESCAPED* FROM THE CITY IN TIME! IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR *VULKO'S* AID, WE--

VULKO-- WHERE *IS* HE, MERA?

HE *STAYED BEHIND...*

HE SAID, "ATLANTIS IS MY CITY, AND AS LONG AS I BREATHE, I'LL NEVER LEAVE HER! *NEVER!*"

VULKO'S A *BRAVE MAN*, MERA--

--BRAVER THAN *I'VE* BEEN, GIVING UP WITHOUT A FIGHT! PERHAPS I SHOULD GO BACK-- FIND OUT WHO'S *FRAMING* ME--!

DON'T YOU THINK WE SHOULD MAKE THAT DECISION *TOGETHER*?

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR *SON*?

AQUAMAN'S ANSWER IS A SMILE AND A SLOW *NOD*, AND A QUIET, LASTING EMBRACE...

THE END

17

NEXT:

* THE HOME IN EXILE!
* THE PROPHECY OF DOOM!

and

"TOXXIN'S REVENGE!"

— PLUS: —

A *NEW* THRILLER STARRING:

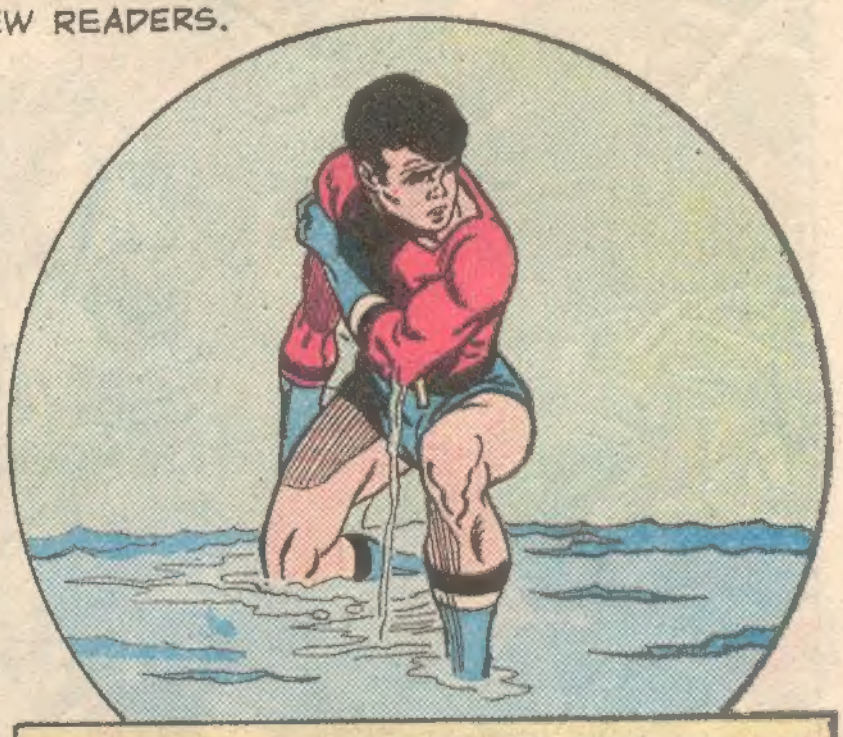
THE CREEPER

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE DURING THE LAST WEEK IN FEBRUARY

AQUAMAN HAS APPEARED IN ADVENTURE COMICS OFF AND ON FOR FORTY YEARS NOW, AND HE'S HAD QUITE A CAST OF CHARACTERS GROW UP AROUND HIM IN THAT TIME. SO, AS OUR FIRST BEHIND-THE-SCENES PEAK AT ADVENTURE WE'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE...

The AQUAFAMILY

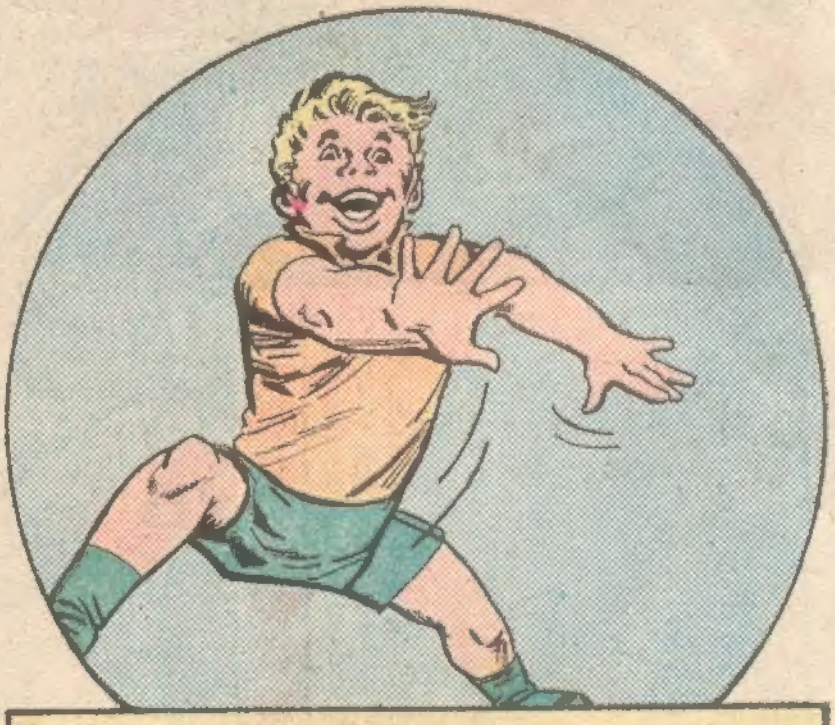
TO OUR NEW READERS.



FIRST, OF COURSE, IS THE SEA-KING HIMSELF ... WHOSE REAL NAME IS **ARTHUR CURRY**. HE WAS BORN THE SON OF A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER AND A WOMAN FROM ATLANTIS, AND AT THE AGE OF 8 HIS UNIQUE TELEPATHIC POWERS ENABLED HIM TO GAIN CONTROL OVER ALL THE FISH IN THE SEVEN SEAS. HE BECAME KING OF ATLANTIS MUCH LATER IN HIS CAREER, AND THAT NEVER RELATED TO HIS ACTUAL POWERS.

THE NEXT CHARACTER TO JOIN THE TEAM WAS **AQUALAD**, AN UNNAMED YOUNGSTER WHO WAS BANISHED FROM ATLANTIS BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID OF FISH. **AQUAMAN** TOOK HIM ON AS AN ASSISTANT, AND TRAINED THE LAD TO BE A SUPER-HERO. **AQUALAD** LATER JOINED THE *TEEN TITANS*, AND IS NOW GOING TO SCHOOL ON THE MAINLAND. (BUT HE'LL BE MEETING UP WITH **AQUAMAN** AGAIN IN #446!)

J-4212



MERA IS THE EX-QUEEN OF A WATER-WORLD IN ANOTHER DIMENSION. SHE GAVE UP HER THRONE TO BECOME **AQUAMAN'S** WIFE AND COMPANION-IN-ADVENTURE SEVERAL YEARS AGO, AND HAS USED HER MYSTERIOUS OTHER-WORLDLY HARD-WATER POWERS TO HELP HIM EVER SINCE.

MERA WAS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OTHER MEMBER OF THE **AQUAFAMILY**, SINCE **AQUABABY** IS HER SON (AND **AQUAMAN'S**, OF COURSE). HE DOESN'T HAVE A NAME YET, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, BUT HE DOES HAVE HIS MOTHER'S SUPER-POWERS... AND THAT MEANS HE'S SURE TO BE A SUPER-HERO WHEN HE GROWS UP!

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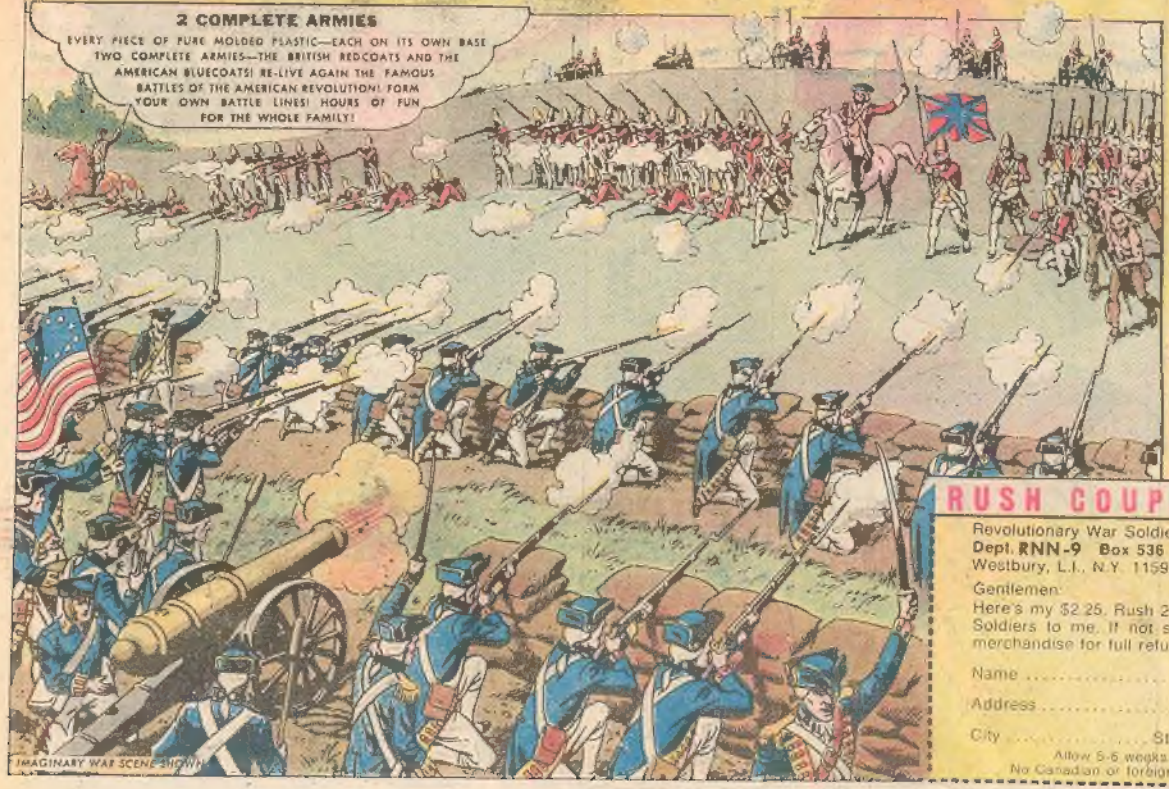

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